

March 11, 2025

To: The Minnesota Senate Committee on Jobs and Economic Development

Re: Supporting value chain businesses advancing “Continuous Living Cover” (SF 2057)

Dear Chair Champion and committee members,

We, the undersigned organizations, are writing to express our strong support for SF 2057, which would advance the development of Minnesota businesses focused on Continuous Living Cover (CLC) agriculture. We imagine a future close at hand when these companies rise as 21st-century leaders in Minnesota’s agriculture and food sector, expanding options for Minnesota growers while supporting profitability, sustainability, and resilience.

Market-based CLC agriculture combines the excellent conservation outcomes of natural landscapes—such as prairie and woodland ecosystems—with the profitability of high-demand crops and diverse revenue streams.

State-supported basic research as well as grassroots innovation have brought new CLC crops and cropping systems to the cusp of commercial launch and scaling. These enterprises include Kernza perennial grain, regenerative poultry systems, hybrid hazelnuts, winter camelina, and elderberries, among others. Private companies and government agencies are increasingly turning to the agriculture sector for innovative ways to meet their environmental commitments, and CLC crops are perfectly suited to meet this new demand.

Minnesota is home to a growing cadre of new CLC-oriented businesses taking CLC innovations to market. A number of these businesses are led by or involve new and beginning farmers, BIPOC individuals and communities, and young entrepreneurs dedicating their lives to a profitable, sustainable, resilient agriculture sector in Minnesota. Similar to long-running State investments in renewable energy, dedicated State investment is needed and warranted to accelerate the supply chains and markets that will support expanded production of CLC crops and begin realizing these systems’ public benefits at scale.

The Legislature has taken preliminary steps to boost such efforts, but the need far outstrips the resources allocated in past sessions. SF 2057 would accelerate the development of CLC value chains by strategically investing in companies poised for commercial breakthrough, delivering significant public benefits to Minnesotans and further solidifying Minnesota as a national and international leader in 21st century agricultural innovation.

Public investment now will spur further innovation and private investment, creating new economic and community development opportunities for our state while also protecting soil, water, biodiversity, and climate.

We urge you to support this important measure during the 2025 legislative session.

Sincerely,

Your organization

Albert Lea Seed

Alliance for Sustainability

Arcola Farms

Audubon Upper Mississippi River

Climate Land Leaders

Conservation Minnesota

Environmental Initiative

Friends of the Mississippi River

Green Lands Blue Waters

Hastings Environmental Protectors

Lakeville Friends of the Environment

Land Stewardship Project

League of Women Voters Upper Mississippi River Region ILO

Mad Agriculture

Minnesota Division, Izaak Walton League of America

Minnesota Trout Unlimited

MN Center for Environmental Advocacy

MN Div. of the Izaak Walton League of America

MNWO

Perennial Pantry

Perennial Promise Growers Cooperative

PURIS

Regen Ag Alliance

Renewing the Countryside

Savanna Institute

Sierra Club North Star Chapter

SUN Consulting Inc

Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota

The Good Acre

Vote Climate